

Notes on the Slave Trade, &c.

I may not be necessary to repeat what has been so fully declared in several modern publications, of the inconsistency of every with every right of mankind, with every feeling of humanity, and every precept of Christianity; nor to point out its inconsistency with the welfare, peace and prosperity of every country, in proportion as it prevails; what grievous sufferings it brings on the poor Negroes; but more especially what a train of fatal vices it produces in their lordly oppressors and their unhappy offspring. Nevertheless for the sake of those who have not met with, or fully considered those former publications, and in hopes that some who are still active in support of Slavery, may be induced to consider their error, and become more wise, the following substance of an address or expostulation made by a sensible Author, to the several ranks of persons most immediately concerned in the trade, is now republished.

"And, first, to the captains employed in this trade. Most of you know the country of Guinea, perhaps now by your own eyes; of it is become a dreary uncultivated wilderness; the inhabitants being almost entirely carried away, so that there are few left on the ground; but you know, or have seen, how populous, how fruitful, how pleasant

it was a few years ago. You know the people were not stupid, not wanting in sense, considering the few means of improvement they enjoyed. Neither did you find them savage, treacherous, or unkind to strangers. On the contrary they were in most parts a sensible and ingenious people; kind and friendly, and generally just in their dealings. Such are the men whom you hire their own money, to tear away from this lovely country: part by stealth, part by force, part as captives in those wars which you raise on purpose. You have seen them torn away, children from their parents, parents from their children: Husbands from their wives, wives from their beloved husbands, brethren and sisters from each other. You have dragged them who had never done you any wrong, perhaps in chains, from their native shore. You have forced them into your ships, like an herd of swine, * them

The following Relation is inserted at the request of the Author.

That I may contribute all in my power towards the good of mankind, by inspiring any of its individuals with a sensible abhorrence for that detestable trade of trading in our Fellow Creatures, and for my share alone for my neglect of duty as a Christian in engaging in that wicked traffic, I offer to the public consideration, some few occurrences of which I was once witness. That being struck by such a precious and affecting scene, they may excite that humane principle, which is the noble and distinguished characteristic of man."

About

them who had souls immortal as your own. You have stowed them together as close as ever they could lie, without any regard either to decency or conveniency—And when many of them had been poisoned by foul air, or had sunk under various hardships; *you have seen their remains delivered to the deep, till the sea should give up his dead.* You have carried the survivors into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life: such slavery as is not found among the Turks at Algiers, no, nor among the heathens in America.

May

About the Year 1749, I sailed from Liverpool to the coast of Guinea, sometime after our arrival, I was ordered to go up the country a considerable distance, upon having notice from one of the Negro Kings, that he had a parcel of Slaves to dispose of, I received my instructions and went, carrying with me an account of such goods we had on board, to exchange for the Slaves we intended to purchase; upon being introduced, I presented him with a small case of Spirits, a Gun, and some trifes, which having accepted, well understood by an interpreter what goods we had, the next day was appointed for viewing the Slaves; we found about two hundred confined in one place. Now here how shall I relate the affecting sight I then beheld, the silent sorrow which appeared in the countenance of the afflicted father, and the painful anguish of the tender mother, expecting to be forever separated from their tender offspring; the distressed man, wringing her hands in preface of her future wretchedness, and the general cry of the innocent, *Slaves!* the apprehension of the perpetual slavery to which they were doomed. I purchased eleven, who I distributed two and two, to our ship. Being but a small vessel (ninety ton) we soon purchased our cargo, and

Gilling

May I speak plainly to you? I must. Love constrains me: Love to you, as well, as those you are concerned with. Is there a God? You know there is. Is he a just God? Then there must be a state of retribution: A state where, in the just God will reward every man according to his work. Then what reward will be tendered to you. O think, beguines! before you drop into eternity! Think how, "He shall have judgment without mercy, that shew-
"ed no mercy." Are you a man? Then you should have a human heart. But have you indeed? What is your heart made of?

fifteen of one hundred and seventy slaves, whom thou may't reader range in thy view, as they were shackled two and two together, pent up within the narrow confines of the main deck, with the complicated distress of sickness, chains and confinement; deprived of every food and social pleasure, in a great measure reduced to a state of desperation. We had not been a fortnight at Sea, before the fatal consequences of this distress appeared, they formed a design of recovering their natural light, liberty, by raising and murdering every soul on board; but the goodness of the Almighty rendered their scheme abortive, and his mercy spared us an hour to repent. The plot was discovered: The ringleader was by the two thumbs over the board; and at Sea we received a number of letters, in this manner he remains till Sea set exposed to the insults and barbarity of the crew of *Samara*, with full power to exercise their cruelty at pleasure. The consequence was, the next morning the miserable fellow lay on his back, dead from the shoulders to the waist. The next victim was a youth who, from too strong a sense of his misery resplend non desistat and died distressed and unnoticed, till the long boat put on board the ship.

Is there no such principle as compassion
 these? Do you never feel another's pain?
 Have you no sympathy? No sense of human
 woes? No pity for the miserable? When you
 saw the flowing eyes, the heaving breast, or
 the bleeding sides and tortured limbs of
 your fellow-creatures. Was you a stone or
 a brute? Did you look upon them with the
 eyes of a tiger? When you laid the
 agonizing creatures down in the sea, or
 when you threw their poor mangled re-
 mains into the sea, had you no relenting?
 Did not one tear drop from your eye, one
 sigh escape from your breast? Do you feel
 no relenting now? If you do not, you must
 go on, till the measure of your iniquities is
 full. Then will the great God deal with
 you, as you have dealt with them, and re-
 quire all their blood at your hands. And
 at that day it shall be more tolerable for So-
 dom and Gomorrah than for you: But if
 your heart does relent, though in a small
 degree, know it is a call from the God of
 love. And to-day, if you hear his voice,
 lighten up your heart—To-day resolve,
 God being your helper to escape for your
 life—Regard not money: All that a man
 hath will he give for his life. Whatsoever
 you lose, lose not your Soul; nothing can
 countervail that loss. Immediately quit the
 horrid trade: At all events be an honest
 man.

This equally concerns every merchant
 who is engaged in the Slave-trade. It is

you that induce the African villain to sell his countrymen; and in order thereto, to steal, rob, murder men, women and children without number: By enabling the English villain to pay him for so doing; whom you overpay, for his execrable labour. It is your money, that is the spring of all, that impowers him to go on, so that whatever he or the African does in this matter, is all your act and deed. And is your conscience quite reconciled to this? Does it never reproach you at all? Has gold entirely blinded your eyes and stupified your heart? Can you see, can you feel no harm therein? Is it doing as you would be done to? Make the case your own.

“Master! (said a Slave at Liverpool to the merchant that owned him) what if some of my countrymen were to come here, and take away my mistress, and master Tommy and master Billy, and carry them into our country and make them slaves, how would you like it?” His answer was worthy of a man: “I will never buy a slave more while I live.” O let his resolution be yours! Have no more any part in this detestable business. Instantly leave it to those unfeeling wretches, who laugh at humanity and compassion.”

And this equally concerns every Person who has an estate in our American plantations: Yea all Slave-holders of whatever rank and degree; seeing men buyers are exactly on a level with menstealers. Indeed you say, “I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not

"not concerned to know how they are
 "come by." Nay, but you are: You are
 deeply concerned, to know that they are
 not stolen: Otherwise you are partaker with
 a thief, and are not a jot honestier than him.
 But you know they are not honestly come
 by: You know they are procured by means
 nothing near so innocent as picking of poc-
 kets, house breaking, or robbery upon the
 highway. You know they are procured
 by a deliberate series of more complicated
 villainy, (of fraud, robbery and murder,)
 than was ever practised either by Maho-
 metans or Pagans; in particular by mur-
 ders of all kinds; by the blood of the inno-
 cent poured upon the ground like water.
 Now it is your money that pays the mer-
 chant, and thro' him the captain and African
 butchers. You therefore are guilty: Yea, prin-
 cipally guilty, of all these frauds, robberies,
 and murders. You are the spring that puts
 all the rest in motion; they would not stir
 a step without you.—Therefore the blood
 of all these wretches, who die before their
 time, whether in their country or else where,
 lies upon your head. The blood of thy
 brother. (for whether thou wilt believe it
 or no, such he is in the sight of him that
 made him) crieth against thee from the
 earth, from the ship and from the waters.
 O! what ever it cost, put a stop to its cry, be-
 fore it be too late. Instantly, at any price,
 were it the half of thy goods, deliver thyself
 from blood guiltiness! Thy hands, thy bed,
 thy

thy furniture, thy house, thy land, are at present stained with blood. Surely it is enough; accumulate no more guilt: Spill no more the blood of the innocent! Do not hire another to shed blood! Do not pay him for doing it! Whether thou art a christian or no, shew thyself a man; be not more savage than a lion or a bear.

Perhaps thou wilt say, "I do not buy any negroes: I only use those left me by my father." But is it enough to satisfy your own conscience! Had your father, have you, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It cannot be, even setting revelation aside. It cannot be, that either war, or contract, can give any man, such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen: Much less is it possible, that any child of man, should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air. And no human law can deprive him of that right, which he derives from the law of nature. If therefore you have any regard to justice, (to say nothing of mercy, nor of the revealed law of God,) render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with whips, chains and all compulsion. Be gentle towards all men. And see that you invariably do unto every one, as you would he should do unto you.